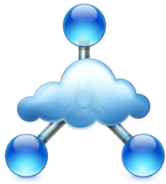


Countdown: Ten Tips for Network Health



#10. Keep your network documentation and topology diagrams up to date so you can provide detailed information to Cisco Support when a problem arises – and shorten time to resolution.

Resources: <http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/docs/availability/high-availability/15111-configmgmt.html#topic13>



9. Use the Out-Of-Band Management and Console ports that come with your Cisco products, so you always have a backup way of logging into your device.

Resources: <http://www.ciscopress.com/articles/article.asp?p=358549>



8. Keep hardware spares close to your devices. This will reduce your downtime during a hardware failure situation.



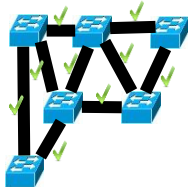
7. Be secure: Use a TACACS or RADIUS server for device logins, and a local user with a type 5 password as a backup. Use Access Control Lists when you can to keep products secure.

Resources: <http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/support/docs/security-vpn/terminal-access-controller-access-control-system-tacacs-10384-security.html>



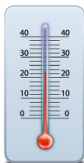
6. Use a Network monitoring system such as Cisco Prime to help monitor your network's health in real time. You'll detect problems more swiftly.

Resources: <http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/products/cloud-systems-management/prime.html>



5. Take advantage of the features your Cisco product offers to optimize performance. For example, many people use *Spanning Tree* to avoid loops in their network. But this comes at the cost of having some links blocked and bandwidth wasted. Some Nexus products have a feature called *FabricPath* that lets you use all of your links with none blocked and no bandwidth wasted.

Resources: <http://www.cisco.com/c/en/us/solutions/data-center-virtualization/fabricpath/index.html>



4. Make sure your environment is hospitable to the product. Check the individual product specs for temperature and power requirements. An unsuitable environment can provoke many forms of undesirable device behavior.

Countdown: Ten Tips for Network Health



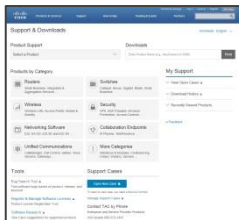
3. When planning a software upgrade, engage Cisco for a bug scrub to avoid nasty surprises. Knowing the bugs within your code version – and the best workarounds – will help you proactively mitigate bug impact on device performance.

Resources: <https://tools.cisco.com/bugsearch/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FvI7ahd-7mU>

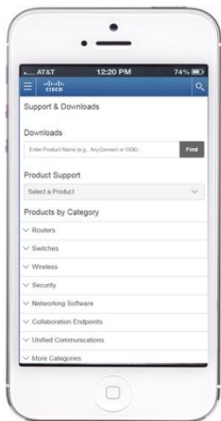


2. Use redundant hardware when you can. Most higher-end Cisco products are modular, and therefore support two supervisor cards. These are the brains of the product. So if one dies there's a second to instantly take over, often with zero downtime. Use two cards to avoid having your device unavailable until it is replaced.



1. Finally, use the [Cisco Support Website](https://support.cisco.com) to both resolve and *avoid* issues. Here you can

- See content and get software for your specific product model
- Choose from 35 specialized tools to speed up support tasks
- Open a TAC case and see the current status of all your cases
- Get personalized links to your product content, downloads and contract information.



And when you're on the go use the [Cisco Technical Support mobile app](https://support.cisco.com/mobile), which offers support features especially built for smartphones and tablets.

Resources:

Cisco Support Website: <http://www.cisco.com/support/>

Cisco Tech Support mobile app:

http://www.cisco.com/web/about/facts_info/apps/technicalsupport.html

Cisco Digital Support “at a glance”:

<http://www.cisco.com/web/tsweb/pdf/cisco-support-website-at-a-glance.pdf>

Cisco Digital Support “how to” resources:

<http://www.cisco.com/web/tsweb/pdf/cisco-digital-support-services-resources.pdf>

Do you have ideas for a future “Ten Tips for Network Health” list? Then please share them with Oli Wheeler – toptips@cisco.com.